DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 096 526 95 CE 002 159

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TITLE	The Several Dimensions of Career Education.
INSTITUTION	Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
BUREAU NO	BR-V-357008
PUB DATE	1 May 74
GRANT	OEG-0-73-1369
NOTE	5p.; For related documents, see CE 002 152-158
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	*Career Education; *Conference Reports; *Curriculum Development; *Program Descriptions; State Departments of Education

ABSTRACT

The report is directed to participants of the State Directors/Coordinators of Career Education Conference, an activity of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Career Education Project. It offers a brief resume of program activities and topics discussed in each session. (MW)

ED 094 526

THE SEVERAL DIMENSIONS OF CAREER EDUCATION

Dallas, Texas
April 29 - May 1, 1974

A brief report for conference participants from David L. Jesser, Director, CCSSO Career Education Project, and Conference Director.

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About the Conference

This conference, the first such conference to be specifically geared to the needs and concerns of State Directors/Coordinators of Career Education, was sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and was an activity of the CCSSO Career Education Project. It was attended by 153 educators having an interest in and a concern about Career Education from 43 states and three extra-state jurisdictions. American Samoa, Guam, and Puerto Rico were represented, as were most of the states.

The fact that there was such widespread representation is highly significant, for it demonstrates a broad-based concern about Career Education. The significance of the representation - and the concern - is underscored by the fact that the costs of participants' travel to and from Dallas were assumed by the state and extra-state education agencies.

While the conference was geared primarily to the needs of State Directors/Coordinators, it should be noted that there were also in attendance, by special invitation, representatives from the Regional Educational Service Centers in Texas, local school districts in California, Texas, and elsewhere, institutions of higher learning, private foundations and corporations, the several branches of the Armed Forces, the National Institute of Education, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Education (DHEW), and the U.S. Office of Education.

About the Program

It is hoped that copies of the several conference program presentations will be available for distribution in the near future, so no attempt will be made to summarize them at this time. A brief resume of the program may help to provide a continuing frame of reference.

Dr. Kenneth Hoyt, Associate Commissioner for Career Education in the USOE, really moved the conference into high gear by not making a speech: instead, he asked for, and received, serious consideration by the conference participants of a draft of the paper "An Introduction to Career Education". Hoyt and members of his staff who were participating distributed study guides

designed to elicit and furnish Hoyt's office with needed information. The "non-speech" approach was about 180 degrees away from traditional conference keynoting activities. Seldom, however, will anyone see a conference "jell" as rapidly; the conference participants, as a result of Hoyt's departure from tradition, were deeply involved from the beginning. (The draft of "An Introduction to Career Education" was distributed to all conference participants.)

Following Dr. Hoyt's initial program presentation, the participants listened to quite a detailed account of efforts - present and anticipated - in Career Education by the National Institute of Education (NIE). Mr. Robert Stump, of the CCEM component of NIE, described what NIE has been attempting to do, has been going about accomplishing its goals, and what its hopes (and anticipated plans) for future years were.

At the conclusion of Stump's presentation, both he and Hoyt were asked to respond to questions from participants. During the "Interaction/Reaction" period, the respect each agency (NIE-USOE) had for the other's Career Education was clearly evident. Also evident was the close working relationship that has emerged between the two. It was during this session that there was some criticism of NIE's handling (and non-release) of materials developed under the CCEM development effort. Several participants indicated a high degree of concern over the fact that the materials have not been made available to the educational institutions, and over the fact that there might be a lot of unnecessary duplication of effort - of "re-inventing the wheel" by state and local education agencies. Stump explained the procedure that had been utilized, as well as the reasons for its use.

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The second general session consisted of descriptions of several of the curriculum development projects funded under Part I of the VEA of 1968. Dr. Elizabeth Simpson of USOE set the stage for the project descriptions - the reasons why they were necessary, initial efforts, and broadness of scope. Project Directors Dr. Patrick Weagraff, Dr. Marla Peterson, Dr. William Fitz, Dr. James Dunn, Dr. Alice Gordon, and Dr. Beryl McKinnerney each presented, via audio and visual means, an overview of their own particular project, and described the products - either existing or anticipated. Materials that have been produced as a result of several project efforts were displayed, and informational brochures were distributed. Conference participants will receive information about other project products as they become available.)

NOTE: Specific information about project efforts can be obtained by contacting Project Directors: Information of a more general nature relating to the projects may be obtained by contacting Dr. Simpson's office in USOE.

At the Monday afternoon session participants also had the opportunity to listen to a description of the Exemplary Projects Program (Part D, VEA) by Dr. Sidney High. (Many participants have expressed special pleasure in learning (some for the first time) about the several USOE sponsored programs having to do with both curriculum development and exemplary programs.)

NOTE: Additional information about the Exemplary Projects Program can be obtained by contacting Dr. High's office.

Additionally, during the Monday (April 29) afternoon session, conference participants were again presented with an opportunity to furnish input for what could be a very significant Career Education effort - an effort relating to the development of multimedia materials dealing with Career Education which would utilize the characters from the "Peanuts" comic strip.

A representative of Charles Schultz Enterprises, which has a contract to develop such materials, discussed the initial plans relating to this effort, and indicated the need for feedback, suggestions, and criticisms. (Participants were given a list of concepts that have, at this point, been identified for inclusion. Participants were asked to react to the list - suggesting additions, deletions, modifications, etc.)

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Because of a rather urgent need to discuss possiblities relating to funding for Career Education, a special session - with attendance voluntary - was scheduled for Monday evening. The evening session was an extraordinary one, and it was extraordinary for many reasons. In the first place, virtually all participants (with the possible exception of some of the local people and program participants who had to leave) were in the conference room at 8:00 p.m. (This, after an extended day session, and at a time that is usually reserved for other activities, would seem to be indicative of the degree of commitment on the part of the State Directors/Coordinators.

At the evening session, Dr. Hoyt, Dr. Gerald Elbers (of USOE), and the participants discussed, both in general and specific fashion, what might be the highest priorities relating to USOE Career Education activities - how the funds, if appropriated, available for the several activities might best be utilized.

Considerable discussion took place, and much (and valuable) information was provided Hoyt and his staff. Many suggestions were made, and many questions were raised. No decisions as such were made, but there seemed to be consensus on several points, including the thought that if funds were to be made available to SEAs for Career Education efforts the funds should have as few strings attached as possible.

NOTE: It should be remembered that Dr. Hoyt invited the conference participants to call either his office or the offices of Dr. Elbers, Terry Newell, Gloria Butler, and Gary Hanna as the need might arise.

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The Third General Session of the conference was devoted to brief reports by representatives of several states concerning Career Education activities and developments in their own states. Participants not only had the opportunity to learn about what had taken place in Oregon, Ohio, Florida, California, and Maryland, but also to gain some insights into how the developments had taken place.

Several states, including Florida and Oregon, brought along regular convention type displays, and these attracted considerable attention. Additionally, many states brought representative samples of their own products, including state plans, informative brochures, curricular materials, etc. These were displayed on tables around the conference room for their perusal or the taking, as the case might be. (From the way the materials vanished from the tables, one can only assume that participants' suitcases were heavily-laden for the trip home.)

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The Fourth General Session (Tuesday p.m.) was devoted to consideration of four basic issues or concerns: Implementation, In-service, Evaluation, and Teacher Preparation. Ms. Linda Keilholtz discussed the matter of implementation, including problems that might be encountered, and possible ways of solving or at least avoiding them. Ms. Nancy Pinson not only discussed in-service, she demonstrated how an effective program might take place, and how real involvement can be achieved. The Texas group (Rambo, Arterbury and Day) gave to the participants numerous ideas relating to determining need, and then Richard Lutz, William Weisgerber, and Robert Weisham discussed efforts that are being made in the states of Washington and Michigan to help teacher training institutions to be more responsibe to the teacher preparation needs as it were, of Career Education.

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About 75 of the conference participants were able to stay for the visit to the Skyline Center in Dallas on Wednesday, May 1. For the vast majority of the group that was the first visit to Skyline, and an initial reaction seemed to be one that could be described as "awesome" or "overwhelming." Following the initial reaction, however, it became possible for the group to look at Skyline in a more objective manner; to ask meaningful questions; to see potential problems; and to see what some "missing pieces" were. It was a fitting climax to the conference.

About the Future

Even as the Dallas Conference was going on, there was discussion about the need for similar conferences to be held in the future. Suggestions relating to the topic(s) for a future conference were also discussed, as were the possible cooperative arrangements that could be made for the financial aspects of a conference. Additionally, each of the participants was asked

to indicate on the Conference Registration form, the area of primary concern with regard to Career Education. (The most commonly expressed concern had to do with implementation; others were finance (funding), and evaluation.)

The several topics mentioned will be considered as plans for a future conference. It is hoped that such a conference can truly be a joint endeavor involving the NIE, the USOE, and the Council of Chief State School Officers.

Meanwhile, please communicate with your colleagues, write to specific project directors, and send pertinent information to your Congressional representatives. Let them know how you feel.

And, above all, please let us have the advantage of your thinking as it relates to future conferences and other activities.